

What is claimed is:

1. A console lighting assembly comprising:

a housing assembly mounted in an interior of a vehicle passenger compartment;

5 a plurality of pulleys positioned in said housing assembly, each said plurality of pulleys being individually rotatable;

10 a plurality of illumination units each including a respective cable and a light generator at a distal end of said cable, each cable spooled on a respective one of said plurality of pulleys, said illumination units being movable between a retracted position and an extended position;

15 a plurality of switch pads located on said housing assembly and positioned around said plurality of illumination units for activating and deactivating a respective illumination unit; and

16 a retractor coupled to said pulleys for retracting said plurality of illumination units from said extended position to said retracted position;

17 wherein each of said plurality of illumination units is pliable so as to maintain a selected orientation of illumination as determined by said user.

2. The console lighting assembly of claim 1 wherein each of said

20 illumination units is independently extendable to a desired length.

3. The console lighting assembly of claim 1 wherein said retractor includes a dial mechanism operated by said user for retracting said plurality of illumination units into said housing assembly.

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4. The console lighting assembly of claim 3 wherein said dial mechanism includes a latch and each of said plurality of pulleys include a respective catch, wherein said latch is secured against said respective catch as said dial mechanism is rotated to retract any of said plurality of illumination units that is in said extended position.

5. The console lighting assembly of claim 4 wherein said dial mechanism includes a plurality of latches each corresponding to a respective pulley, wherein each latch is spring loaded.
- 5 6. The console lighting assembly of claim 4 wherein said user rotates said dial mechanism to retract said plurality of illumination units.
- 10 7. The console lighting assembly of claim 4 wherein said dial mechanism is rotatable between a crank position and a stop position said crank position corresponding to a position of said retractor when the said illumination units are extended, said stop position correlating to a position of said retractor when said retractor is rotated to retract said illumination units, and said dial mechanism further includes a coil mechanism for automatically returning said dial mechanism from said stop position to said crank position.
- 15 8. The console lighting assembly of claim 1 wherein an exterior surface of each of said switch pads surrounds each said illumination unit and is flush with an exterior surface of a respective illumination unit when said respective illumination unit is in said retracted position and deactivated.
- 20 9. The console lighting assembly of claim 8 wherein each of said switch pads includes a depressed position for activating said respective illumination unit and an non-depressed position for deactivating said respective illumination unit, and wherein each of said switch pads maintains said depressed position during said activation of said respective illumination unit to allow said user to grasp and extend said respective illumination unit.
- 25 10. The console lighting assembly of claim 1 wherein said housing assembly is positioned in an interior overhead console.
- 30 11. The console lighting assembly of claim 1 wherein said housing assembly is positioned in a center base console unit.

12. A method for illuminating a selectable area of an interior passenger compartment of a vehicle, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a plurality of illumination units rotatable about a plurality of pulleys,
5 said illumination units being moveable between a retracted position and an extended position, each illumination unit including a light source attached to a flexible conductor, said flexible conductor encased by a pliable casing;

providing a plurality of switch pads positioned around said plurality of illumination units for activating and deactivating a respective illumination unit;

10 providing a retractor for retracting said plurality of illumination units from said extended position to said retracted position;

depressing a respective switch pad to activate a respective illumination unit;
and

extending said respective illumination unit from said retracted position wherein
15 said respective illumination unit maintains a selected orientation of illumination as manually determined by said user.

13. The method of claim 12 further comprising the step of retracting said respective illumination unit by rotating a dial mechanism located said housing
20 assembly.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein said retracting step includes rotating said dial mechanism to retract said respective illumination unit.